

IN THE CLAIMS:

Applicants request the entry of the following amendment prior to the examination of the above-identified application.

1. (Original) A carding machine comprising a carding cylinder and a revolving card flat assembly comprising revolving card flat bars, the machine further having a lateral slideway assembly comprising a flat curved slideway and a second curved slideway and upon which ends of the card flat bars can slide with a part on said first slideway and a part on said second slideway, wherein said first slideway has a first sliding-contact surface and said second slideway has a second sliding-contact surface which is so located relative to the first sliding-contact surface that there is at least a first portion of said slideway assembly in which a distance in the vertical direction between the first and second sliding-contact surfaces increases and a second portion of said slideway assembly in which said distance decreases.

2. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which the vertical distance between the sliding-contact surfaces of the slideways changes non-uniformly.

3. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which the second slideway is integrated in the first slideway.

4. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which at least one slideway is flexible.

5. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which at least one slideway is constructed to be displaceable in the circumferential direction in relation to the cylinder.

6. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which the height gradient between the two slideways has an arbitrary contour.

7. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which at least one slideway is exchangeable for another slideway having a different contour.

8. (Currently Amended) A carding machine according to claim [[s]] 1, in which the two slideways are each separately displaceable relative to one another on one side of the cylinder.

9. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 8, in which displacement of the slideways is effected by a driven displacement device.

10. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 8, in which displacement of the slide rails can be effected during continuous operation.

11. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which a slideway assembly with first and second slideways is present on each side of the cylinder.

12. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which – viewed in the lateral direction – the first and second sliding-contact surfaces cross one another and, at the intersection point of the sliding-contact surfaces, the sliding-contact surfaces are at substantially the same height.

13. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which each card flat bar end comprises two sliding elements as said parts that contact respectively said first and second slideways.

14. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 13, in which the sliding elements are of different cross-section and/or diameter.

15. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which the card flat bars are arranged so as to rotate about an axis of rotation parallel to the cylinder axis.

16. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which the angle between the carding surface of at least one card flat bar and a respective tangent to the clothing of the cylinder is adjustable.

17. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which – viewed in the direction of rotation of the cylinder – at a fibre inlet region of the revolving card flat assembly at least one carding nip between a card flat bar and the cylinder closes.

18. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which – viewed in the direction of rotation of the cylinder – at a fibre outlet region of the revolving card flat assembly at least one carding nip between a card flat bar and the cylinder opens.

19. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 1, in which between the fibre inlet region and the fibre outlet region at least one card flat bar is at an angle of 0° relative to the cylinder.

20. (Currently Amended) A carding machine according to ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1, in which the card flat bar can automatically assume different offset angle positions as it traverses the working region from card flat inlet to card flat exit.

21. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 20, in which the different offset angle is set independently of location.

22. (Currently Amended) A carding machine according to claim 20 ~~or claim 21~~, in which the change in the offset angle is caused by height offset of the slide tracks relative to one another.

23. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 22, in which the height offset over the path of the revolving card-flat assembly is freely selectable.

24. (Original) A carding machine according to claim 22 in which the height offset over the path of the revolving card flat assembly has steps in continuity, for example, of a sharp-edged nature.

25. (Original) A carding machine comprising a carding cylinder and a revolving card flat assembly comprising revolving card flat bars, the machine further having a lateral slideway assembly comprising a first curved slideway and a second curved slideway and upon which the card flat bars can slide with a first end part on said first slideway and a second end part on said second slideway, wherein said first slideway has a first sliding-contact surface and said second slideway has a second sliding-contact surface which is so located relative to the first sliding-contact surface that there are at least a convergent portion and a divergent portion of said slideway assembly in which in the vertical direction said first and second sliding-contact surfaces respectively converge and diverge.